



# YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY RESULTS

2017



# RHODE ISLAND YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY RESULTS 2017

## CONNECTION TO SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES

### Background

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey is a collaboration among the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH), the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), and the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals (BHDDH). The survey, which is one of three State agency surveys, is administered every two years in a sample of Rhode Island public high and middle schools. These most recent data were collected from January 2017 to June 2017. By participating, schools make sure their students' voices are heard and Rhode Island obtains an accurate, comprehensive state-wide understanding of the issues adolescents face.

### YRBS Data Collection

YRBS data were collected through an anonymous survey of randomly sampled high schools and middle schools. A 98-question survey was completed by 2,221 students in 19 public, charter, special education, alternative, and vocational high schools. A 48-question survey was completed by 1,484 students in 19 public, charter, and alternative middle schools. Local parent permission procedures were followed before administration, including informing parents that their child's participation was voluntary.

### Rhode Island Numbers, 2017

While YRBS data were collected on a number of health topics like tobacco use, sexual activity, violence, mental health and suicide, a decision was made to organize the YRBS data for this report by Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies. YRBS topics were organized to align with three of the five SEL core competencies: self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision making (self-awareness and social awareness competencies are not addressed). These skills include recognizing and managing emotions, making responsible decisions, establishing positive relationships, and handling challenging situations effectively.

By organizing Rhode Island YRBS data within this framework, and overlaying it with RIDE's Surveyworks annual data and SEL individual school composite scores, school administrators are able to consider the implications of promoting student's social and emotional learning and its connection to promoting students' well-being. Developing social and emotional skills is important for academic achievement and encouraging healthy behavior. Students with high social and emotional competencies are more likely to be active and successful learners and are less likely to engage in substance use, sexual activity, and have mental health problems.



Here are some questions to consider when reading through and discussing the YRBS results:

- ▶ Are these data reflective of what we see in our middle and high school students?
- ▶ What factors within our school district do we think contribute to these results?
- ▶ What can we do about decreasing risky behaviors?
- ▶ How can these data help me to describe the connections between healthy behaviors and academic achievement that may enhance or detract from learning among youth in my school/district?
- ▶ What are the evidence-based policies, programs, and practices that can be implemented to address the concerns and further support academic success among youth in my school/district?

#### **Additional Resources**

All YRBS data about risk behaviors and at-risk students:

**[health.ri.gov/data/adolescenthealth/](https://health.ri.gov/data/adolescenthealth/)**

CDC survey, tools for comparing YRBS results to various locations:

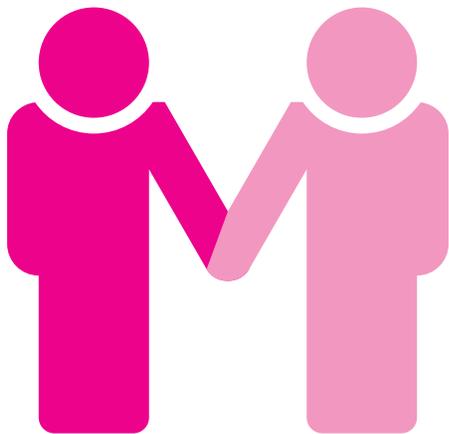
**[nccd.cdc.gov/youthonline/App/Default.aspx](https://nccd.cdc.gov/youthonline/App/Default.aspx)**

To request a custom analysis of the statewide data or to have the YRBS Coordinator present these results, contact Tara Cooper, Rhode Island Department of Health, at **401-222-7628**.

To access the Rhode Island Department of Education Surveyworks webpage, visit: **[ride.ri.gov/InformationAccountability/RIEducationData/SurveyWorks.aspx](https://ride.ri.gov/InformationAccountability/RIEducationData/SurveyWorks.aspx)**

# WHAT YRBS DATA TELL US ABOUT RI TEEN SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES: RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Relationship skills include the ability to maintain relationships with diverse individuals, to communicate clearly, listen well, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek help when needed. The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) provides us with an opportunity to measure these issues with data straight from the students' voice.



## Sexual activity:

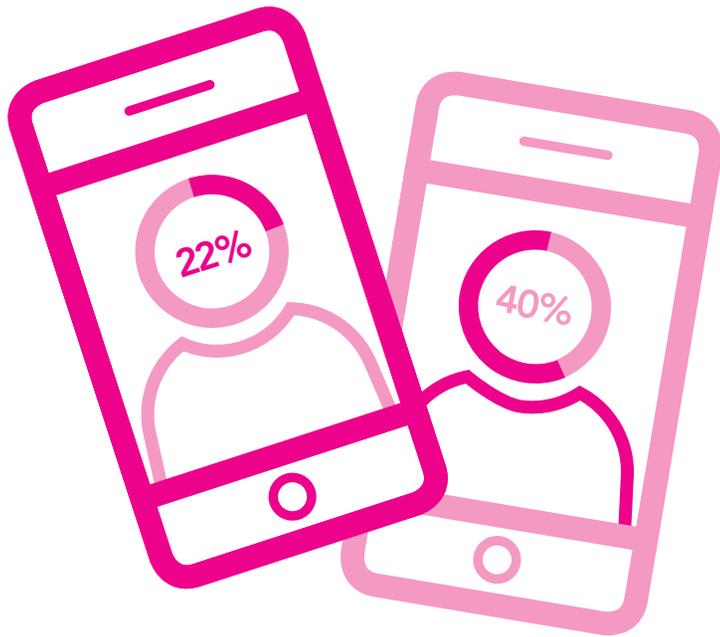
**26%** of high school students are currently sexually active  
(had sexual intercourse within the last 3 months)

**58%** of high school students who are sexually active used  
a condom the last time they had sex.

**Dating violence:** *Among high school students who have dated someone in the last year,*

**12%** were forced to do sexual things  
(kissing, touching, sexual intercourse)

**9%** were physically assaulted  
by the person they were dating



### Maintaining relationships with diverse individuals:

**22%** of high school students have been electronically bullied or bullied on school grounds in the last year.

**40%** of middle school students have been bullied electronically or on school grounds in their lifetime.

### Seeking help when needed:

**82%** of middle school students feel comfortable seeking help from an adult other than a parent if they have an important issue affecting their life.

**71%** of high school students have a teacher or other adult they can talk to if they have a problem.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO: DATING VIOLENCE

Ensure your school complies with the requirements of the Lindsay Ann Burke Act, including:

- ▶ Having a district-wide policy on dating violence that is regularly reviewed and communicated to students, parents, and faculty/Staff.
- ▶ Ensure students (grade 7 through 12) are exposed to information about teen dating violence in their health education curriculum including but not limited to warning signs of dating violence, consent, characteristics of healthy relationships, and resources on where to get help (Rhode Island's 24/7 domestic/dating violence hotline **(1-800-494-8100)**). A free evidence-based curriculum on teen dating violence is available at [breakthecycle.org](http://breakthecycle.org).
- ▶ Provide information on teen dating violence to parents/guardians and school staff including the warning signs and important steps to take if they suspect their child is in an abusive relationship. Find handouts for parents here: [bit.ly/2JSplqG](http://bit.ly/2JSplqG)
- ▶ Schools may choose to provide Bystander Intervention Training to students, providing strategies and skills for students to intervene to prevent possible sexual violence. For more information on Your Voice Your View Bystander Intervention workshops please contact Sandra Malone at Day One **(401-421-4100)**.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO: SEXUAL HEALTH

- ▶ Provide students with evidence-based/informed curricula aligned with the Rhode Island Health Education Framework, Rhode Island Comprehensive Health Instructional Outcomes, and the National Sexuality Education Standards.
- ▶ Promote youth asset development programs within school settings that teach adolescents social and emotional learning skills, including problem solving, effective communication, and long-term planning.
- ▶ Explore school-based/school-linked practices and structural interventions that increase access to services and materials that support the prevention of STDs, HIV and unintended pregnancy.
- ▶ To view locations that distribute free condoms, please visit [health.ri.gov/findcondoms/](http://health.ri.gov/findcondoms/) If you are interested in learning more about condom distribution for you school, please contact the Rhode Island Department of Health at **401-222-2577**.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO: BULLYING

- ▶ Ensure your school adheres to the Rhode Island Department of Education's Safe School Act/Statewide Bullying Policy, available online at: [bit.ly/2Agnz3c](http://bit.ly/2Agnz3c)
- ▶ Learn more about the different forms of bullying and how to prevent, recognize, and respond to instances of bullying at: [stopbullying.gov](http://stopbullying.gov)

# WHAT YRBS DATA TELL US ABOUT RI TEEN SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES: RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR

The ability to make decisions about personal behavior and social interactions, and evaluate the consequences of actions for the well-being of oneself and others is an important aspect of teenage development. The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) provides us with an opportunity to measure these issues with data straight from the students' voice.

Behavior	In a class of 25 RI Middle School students		In a class of 25 RI High School students	
	6th grade	8th grade	9th grade	12th grade
Ever drank alcohol	3 students; 12.8%	7 students; 27.3%	10 students; 38.8%	16 students; 64.1%
Ever smoked marijuana	1 student; 3.1%	4 students; 14.7%	6 students; 22.8%	12 students; 49.4%
Ever smoked an e-cigarette	3 students; 10.1%	6 students; 23.7%	9 students; 35.0%	12 students; 46.1%
Ever smoked a cigarette	1 student; 2.7%	2 students; 7.3%	4 students; 16.2%	7 students; 26.5%

**Emerging Behavior: 9% of high school students currently use flavored tobacco.**



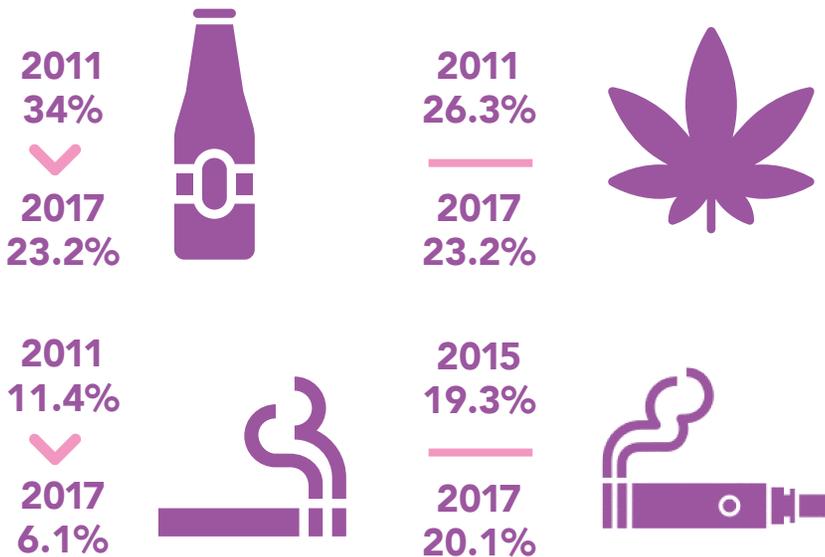
### RI tobacco, marijuana and alcohol use:

**65%** of high school students have smoked cigarettes, smoked an e-cigarette, used marijuana, or drank alcohol.

**30%** of middle school students have smoked cigarettes, smoked an e-cigarette, used marijuana, or drank alcohol.

### Substance Use among RI high school students: 2011-2017

Rates of current drinking and use of lit cigarettes among high school students have declined. However, use of marijuana use and e-cigarettes have not changed.



### RI high school tobacco and marijuana use:

**#1** reason students use e-cigarettes is: a family or friend uses them

### WHAT YOU CAN DO: TOBACCO

- ▶ Enforce state laws that ban all tobacco product use and possession on all school properties at all times—to everyone, everywhere, indoors and outdoors. This includes all e-cigarette devices and smokeless tobacco. To print enforcement signs, visit [health.ri.gov/tobacco](http://health.ri.gov/tobacco) and select “publications”.
- ▶ Support Tobacco Free Youth Initiatives in your school.
- ▶ Support teachers and staff in learning about current trends in all tobacco product use, how flavored tobacco products target youth, and evidence-based prevention strategies.
- ▶ For free technical assistance from the Tobacco Control Program, call the Rhode Island Department of Health at **401-222-5960**.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO: MARIJUANA AND ALCOHOL PREVENTION

**Get involved:** To address the issue of drug abuse in your area, it is important to get involved in **prevention programs in your community**. Find out about the local prevention coalition and share with students and families. Seek out activities you and your students can participate in together. Visit [ripvention.org/](http://ripvention.org/) to identify local prevention activities in your city or town or district.

**Youth engagement:** Work with your school district to prevent use of substances at all school-related functions.

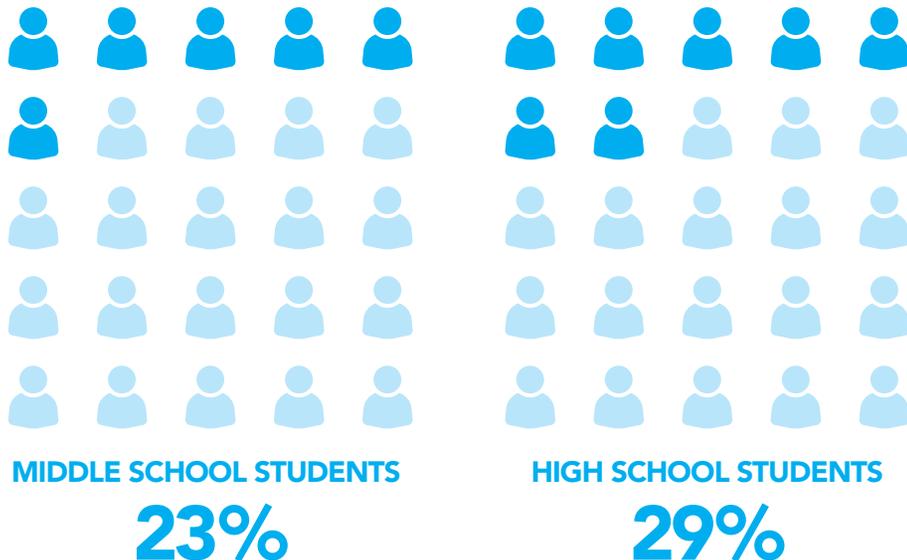
- ▶ “**THINK ABOUT IT – PROM AND GRADUATION SEASON**” is the campaign created through a partnership between SADD and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. It is aimed at establishing dialogue between school administrators, teachers, and students to create a safer and more positive environment in your school, and increase visibility and awareness in your community about the dangers of alcohol, other drugs, and impaired driving, especially during prom and graduation season. [Click here](#) for the entire pre-prom and graduation planning kit.
- ▶ Develop routine monitoring of bathrooms and parking lots for youth substance use.
- ▶ Hold athletes and participants in school organizations to a no-use policy even when not in school. Peer-leadership programs are available. Varsity Athletes Against Substance Abuse (VAASA) is a peer-leadership program in which high school varsity athletes pledge to remain alcohol and drug free. The athletes are trained to address younger students as positive role models. To collaborate with your school Student Assistance Counselor or to get more information, call Rhode Island Student Assistance at **401-732-8680**.

**Educate students:** **ALCOHOL AND THE TEENAGE BRAIN:** [Share this engaging video](#) about alcohol and the teenage brain with your students or embed it in your PES presentations. **CANNABIS AND THE TEENAGE BRAIN:** [Click here](#) for an excellent cartoon video and a fun way to teach students about what marijuana does to the developing teen brain.

# WHAT YRBS DATA TELL US ABOUT RI TEEN SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES: SELF MANAGEMENT

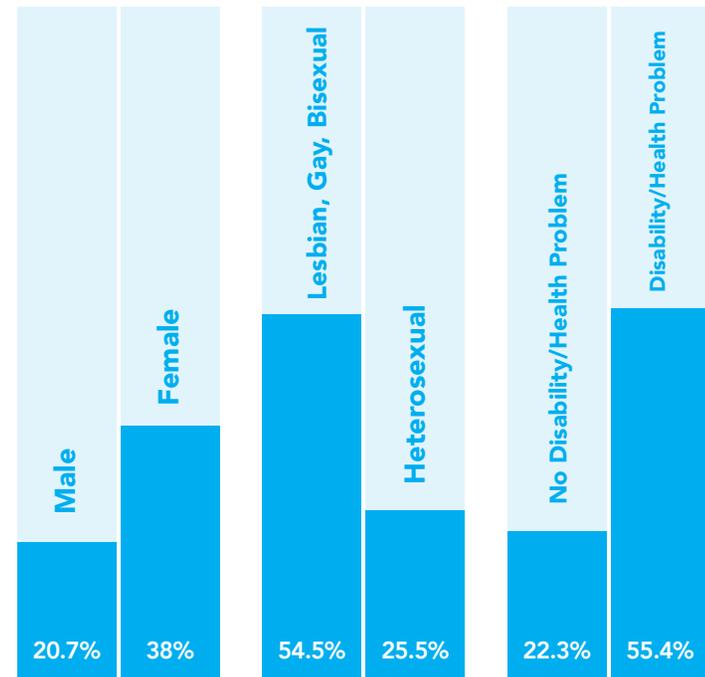
The ability to manage stress, regulate emotions, and motivate oneself can have a significant impact on day-to-day life and health among teens. The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) provides an opportunity for us to measure these issues from the students' perspective.

## Reporting feelings of sadness/hopelessness:



## In an average class of 25:

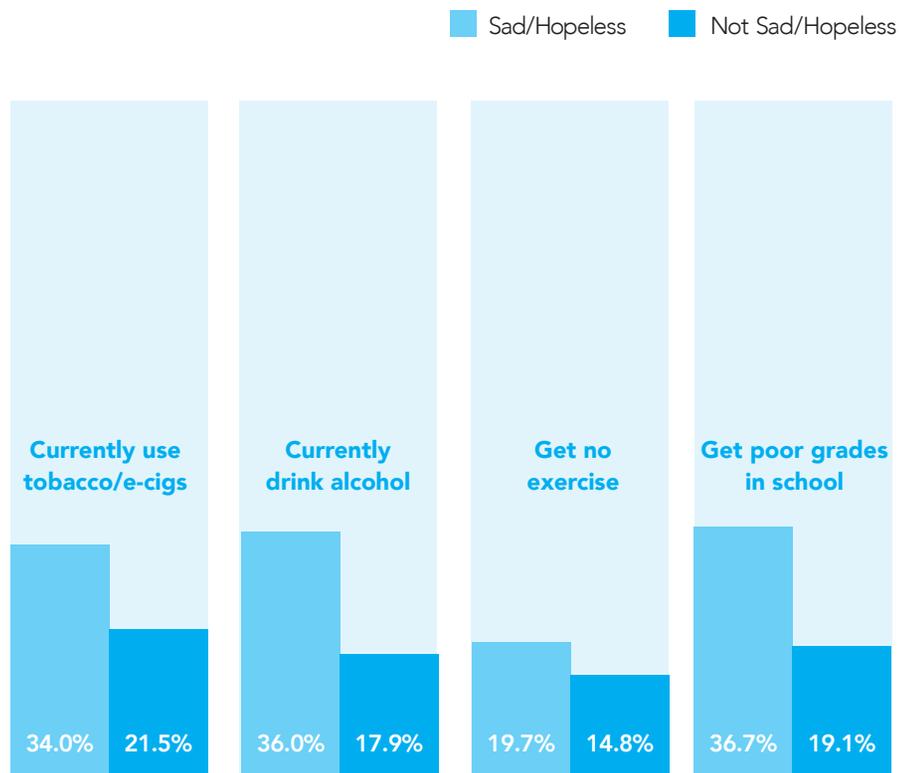
**6 middle school students (23%) and 7 high school students (29%) reported feeling so sad/hopeless** for 2 or more consecutive weeks that they stopped doing some normal activities.



Female students, gay/lesbian/bisexual students, and students with long-term health problems or physical/emotional/learning disabilities were most likely to report feelings of sadness/hopelessness.

**18% of middle schoolers have ever seriously considered suicide.**

**16% of high school students seriously considered suicide within the last year.**



### Stress management, impulse control, and self-motivation:

Students report high rates of mental distress and this distress can have a significant impact on health and behavior. Teaching students to effectively manage stress can improve their overall well-being.

Those who reported feelings of sadness or hopelessness were more likely to drink alcohol, use tobacco, lack exercise, and get poor grades in school.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO: DEPRESSION/SUICIDAL IDEATION

- ▶ Train your faculty and school staff to recognize the signs of suicidal ideation/mental health distress using an evidence-based curriculum: **Question, Persuade, Refer** or **Mental Health First Aid** are both recommended by the Rhode Island Department of Health. Contact Travis Vendetti at [travis.vendetti@health.ri.gov](mailto:travis.vendetti@health.ri.gov) for more information.
- ▶ Annually perform a walk-through of your school's suicide prevention protocol/policy as a part of your district's mandatory School Safety Plan. The RI Department of Education and RI Emergency Management Agency have made a model School Safety Plan available to school districts at: [ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/HealthSafety/EmergencyPreparedness.aspx](http://ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/HealthSafety/EmergencyPreparedness.aspx).
- ▶ Ensure your school meets the requirements for health education in Rhode Island, specifically by addressing the required topics of mental health and suicide prevention within the curriculum and ensuring they know which school staff to speak to if they or their friends are experiencing suicidal thoughts. You can access a free mental health curriculum guide for high school students at: [bit.ly/2LhcuUx](http://bit.ly/2LhcuUx).
- ▶ As a school, take the Campaign to Change Direction pledge to learn and recognize the five Signs of Emotional Pain and the Healthy Habits of Emotional Well-being. Learn more about how to spread the word and make the pledge at: [changedirection.org](http://changedirection.org).

# ALL DATA FROM RI 2017 YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY

## RELATIONSHIP SKILLS: Middle School

# in a class of 25

21%	Ever electronically bullied	5
33%	Ever bullied on school grounds	8
40%	Ever bullied electronically or on school grounds	10
16%	In a physical fight on school property ( <i>last 12 months</i> )	4
22%	Ever carried a weapon	6
8%	Ever had sexual intercourse	2
82%	Feel comfortable seeking help from an adult besides parents if they had an important question affecting their life	20
66%	Feel like they belong at their school	16

## RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIORS: Middle School

# in a class of 25

5%	Ever smoked a combustible/lit cigarette	1
2%	Currently smoke combustible/lit cigarettes (smoked in last 30 days)	<1
16%	Ever used an e-vapor product	4
6%	Currently use an e-vapor product (used in last 30 days)	2
8%	Currently use any tobacco product (used lit cigarette, e-vapor product, cigars, smokeless tobacco in last 30 days)	2
21%	Ever drank alcohol	5
9%	Ever used marijuana	2
7%	Ever taken prescription pain meds without a doctor's prescription	2
20%	Ever rode in car with a driver who had been drinking alcohol	5

## SELF-MANAGEMENT: Middle School

# in a class of 25

23%	Felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for 2+ weeks that they stopped doing some usual activities ( <i>in last 12 months</i> )	6
18%	Ever seriously considered attempting suicide	5
12%	Ever made a plan about how they would commit suicide	3
7%	Ever attempted suicide	2

## RELATIONSHIP SKILLS: High School

# in a class of 25

<b>14%</b>	Electronically bullied <i>(last 12 months)</i>	<b>4</b>
<b>17%</b>	Bullied on school grounds <i>(last 12 months)</i>	<b>4</b>
<b>22%</b>	Either bullied electronically or on school grounds <i>(last 12 months)</i>	<b>5</b>
<b>11%</b>	In physical fight on school property <i>(last 12 months)</i>	<b>3</b>
<b>5%</b>	Carried a weapon on school property <i>(at least once in last 30 days)</i>	<b>1</b>
<b>7%</b>	Did not go to school because they felt unsafe <i>(at least once in last 30 days)</i>	<b>2</b>
<b>9%</b>	Ever physically forced to have sex	<b>2</b>
<b>7%</b>	Experienced sexual dating violence <i>(last 12 months)</i>	<b>2</b>
<b>5%</b>	Experienced physical dating violence <i>(last 12 months)</i>	<b>1</b>
<b>11%</b>	Experienced physical or sexual dating violence <i>(last 12 months)</i>	<b>3</b>
<b>36%</b>	Ever had sexual intercourse	<b>9</b>
<b>26%</b>	Currently sexually active <i>(had sex with at least one person in last 3 months)</i>	<b>6</b>
<b>58%</b>	Used a condom during last sexual intercourse <i>(among those currently sexually active)</i>	<b>3</b>
<b>88%</b>	Used at least one method of birth control <i>(among those currently sexually active)</i>	<b>6</b>
<b>71%</b>	Have at least one teacher or other adult in their school that they can talk to if they have a problem	<b>18</b>

## RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIORS: High School

# in a class of 25

<b>20%</b>	Ever smoked a combustible/lit cigarette	<b>5</b>
<b>6%</b>	Currently smoke combustible/lit cigarettes <i>(smoked in last 30 days)</i>	<b>2</b>
<b>40%</b>	Ever used an e-vapor product	<b>10</b>
<b>20%</b>	Currently use an e-vapor product <i>(used in last 30 days)</i>	<b>5</b>
<b>9%</b>	Currently use a flavored tobacco product <i>(used in last 30 days)</i>	<b>2</b>
<b>26%</b>	Currently use any tobacco product <i>(used lit cigarette, e-vapor product, cigars, smokeless tobacco in last 30 days)</i>	<b>6</b>
<b>50%</b>	Ever drank alcohol	<b>13</b>
<b>23%</b>	Currently drink alcohol <i>(in last 30 days)</i>	<b>6</b>
<b>11%</b>	Currently binge drink <i>(4+ drinks for females, 5+ drinks for males in one sitting, in last 30 days)</i>	<b>3</b>
<b>37%</b>	Ever used marijuana	<b>9</b>
<b>23%</b>	Currently use marijuana <i>(in last 30 days)</i>	<b>6</b>
<b>10%</b>	Ever misused prescription pain meds	<b>2</b>
<b>4%</b>	Ever used heroin	<b>1</b>
<b>14%</b>	Rode in car with driver who had been drinking alcohol <i>(in last 30 days)</i>	<b>3</b>
<b>25%</b>	Rode in car with driver who had been using marijuana <i>(in last 30 days)</i>	<b>6</b>

## SELF-MANAGEMENT: High School

# in a class of 25

<b>29%</b>	Felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for 2+ weeks that they stopped doing some usual activities <i>(in last 12 months)</i>	<b>7</b>
<b>16%</b>	Seriously considered attempting suicide <i>(last 12 months)</i>	<b>4</b>
<b>14%</b>	Made a plan about how they would commit suicide <i>(last 12 months)</i>	<b>3</b>
<b>11%</b>	Attempted suicide <i>(last 12 months)</i>	<b>3</b>
<b>19%</b>	Frequent mental distress <i>(mental health not good on 14 or more days of the last 30 days)</i>	<b>5</b>

# RI SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING STANDARDS: COMPETENCIES FOR SCHOOL AND LIFE SUCCESS

**Self-Awareness:** The ability to recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior and to assess one's strengths and limitations.

- ▶ Individual demonstrates an understanding of one's emotions.
- ▶ Individual identifies when help is needed and who can provide it.
- ▶ Individual demonstrates awareness of his or her own personal rights and responsibilities.
- ▶ Individual demonstrates knowledge of his or her own personal strengths, cultural and linguistic assets, and aspirations.
- ▶ Individual seeks to understand and identify his or her own prejudices and biases.

**Self-Management:** The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations and to set and work toward personal and academic goals.

- ▶ Individual demonstrates the skills to manage one's emotions, thoughts, impulses, and stress in constructive ways.
- ▶ Individual manages materials, space, time and responsibilities effectively.
- ▶ Individual demonstrates skills to develop, evaluate, modify, and achieve goals.
- ▶ Individual demonstrates a resilient attitude and growth mindset, even in the face of adversity and challenges.

**Social Awareness:** The ability to take the perspective of others and empathize with them, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures, and to understand norms for behavior.

- ▶ Individual reads social cues and responds appropriately.
- ▶ Individual seeks to understand and demonstrates respect for individuals, including those with diverse backgrounds, cultures, abilities, languages, and identities.
- ▶ Individual demonstrates empathy for other people's emotions and perspectives.
- ▶ Individual recognizes and respects leadership capacity in oneself and others.
- ▶ Individual contributes productively to one's school, family, workplace, and community.

**Relationship Skills:** The ability to communicate clearly, listen well, cooperate with others, resist inappropriate social pressures, and to seek and offer help when needed.

- ▶ Individual uses communication and interpersonal skills to interact effectively with others, including those with diverse backgrounds, cultures, abilities, languages, and identities.
- ▶ Individual uses appropriate communication strategies and interpersonal skills to maintain relationships with others.
- ▶ Individual demonstrates the skills to respectfully engage in and resolve interpersonal conflicts in various contexts.
- ▶ Individual recognizes when others need help and demonstrates the ability to provide or seek assistance.

**Responsible Decision-Making:** The ability to make constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms and to evaluate the consequences of actions and to consider the safety and well-being of others.

- ▶ Individual applies problem-solving skills to engage responsibly in a variety of situations.
- ▶ Individual uses and adapts appropriate tools and strategies to solve problems.
- ▶ Individual evaluates impact of decisions on self, others, and the given situation and adjusts behavior appropriately.
- ▶ Individual considers ethical, safety, and societal factors when making choices and decisions.
- ▶ Individual considers and responds appropriately to external influences (e.g. media, peers, authority figures) on decision-making.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Integrate [RI Social and Emotional Learning Standards](#) through general teaching practices and by embedding within school curricula.

Join the [RIDE Social and Emotional Learning \(SEL\) Listserv](#) to hear about attending RIDE SEL Community of Practice meetings and receive other SEL information and resources.

Explore the [RIDE Social and Emotional Learning \(SEL\) website](#) for information on the connection between SEL and academics, resources on teaching SEL skills, SEL and IEP goals and more.

Cross-reference the [RIDE English Learners website](#) for Social and Emotional Learning resources that can have positive effects for English-language learners and their families, including information on meaningful communication and cultural and emotional adjustment stages.

Provide professional development for faculty in Mental Health First Aid.

Implement school wide practices that support positive and healthy behaviors.

Explore the [Collaborative for Social and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#) website for information on national research, policy, practices and collaborations.

## Thank you!

The Rhode Island Department of Health would like to acknowledge the cooperation and effort of all the schools, and students who participate in the Youth Risk Behavior each administration year.



**RIDE** Rhode Island  
Department  
of Education



[health.ri.gov/data/adolescenthealth/](https://health.ri.gov/data/adolescenthealth/)



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